Suggestion of Planning Commission Regarding Review of MOUs in Power Sector

879. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to State:

(a) whether Planning Commission has suggested the review of the Memoranda of Understanding between private companies and States to set up power plants;

(b) If so, the details of the guidelines issued by the Planning Commission to the State Governments in this regard; and

(c) the reaction of the State Governments thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI URMILA BEN CHIMANBHAI PATEL): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Open Issue of Loan Krishna River Valley Development Plan

880. DR. BAPU KALDATE: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to State:

(a) whether request has been received from the State Government of Maharashtra for open issue of loan in regard to Krishna River Valley Development Plan;

(b) whether the State Government has requested for "tax free" loan;

(c) if so, the response of the Central Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (DR. DEBIPROSAD PAL): (a) and (b) No such request has been received from the Government of Maharashtra.

(c) Does not arise.

Wholesale Price Index

881. SHRI KRISHAN LAL SHARMA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to State:

(a) whether it is a fact that 447 commodities constitute the basket to calculate the wholesale price index in the country;

(b) if so, the number of commodities whose prices have gone up or declined during the quarter July—Spetember of the year;

(c) whether it is also a fact that prices of daily use articles e.g. vegetables, pulses, meat etc. are constantly on increase; and

(d) if so, any steps being taken to maintain the price rise of these commodities in order to give relief to common man?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (DR. DEBIPROSAD PAL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The number of commodities whose wholesale price during the quarter July—September, 1995-96 declined, rose or remained unchanged is listed below:

Whole sale price Changes	Number of Commodities
Decline	78
Unchanged	196
Below 5% rise	101
5% to 7% rise	22
7% to 10% rise	16
Above 10% rise	34
Total Commodities	447

(c) In the current financial year, pulses had registered an increase of 6.3% till mid November, 1995 except in case of gram whose price had fallen by about 20%. Amongst cereals, wholesale price of wheat was marginally lower than last year, but price of rice was up by 6.6%. Some of the price changes in vegetables are seasonal and their price, especially of onion and potatoes fluctuates widely between seasons. Eggs, fish and meat together rose by about 5% this year. However, price of kerosene has remained unchanged for the past two years.

(d) Some of the steps taken by the Government during the current financial year to moderate the growth of prices are as follows:

(i) Strengthening of Public distribution system and supplementing supplies, if necessary, by imports.

(ii) Waiving of stock limit for imported essential products.

(iii) Adjustment in trade and tariff policies in the Budget for current year to ensure that domestic prices of industrial products remain competitive.

(iv) Substantial reduction in excise duties on a number of items.

(v) Reduction of fiscal deficit in the budget proposals for the current financial year.

(vi) Placing a cap on Central Government's borrowings from the RBI through the issue of ad-hoc Treasury Bills and containing monetary growth through a series of measures including raising of CRR and sale of Government Securities by the RBI.

Entry of Private Sector into Power Transmission

882. SHRI MOHAN BABU: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to State:

(a) whether Government have deferred a decision on permitting the entry of private sector into power transmission;

(b) whether Government have allowed amendments to the Electricity Supply Act, 1948 to permit exclusive transmission projects in the public/ Government sector to act as generating companies;

(c) if so, whether Power Grid Corporation of India which have so far been acting as a generating company would now get legal sanction for its transmission activities also; and

(d) if so, whether this decision will also help several States in processing and finalising proposals?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI URMILA BEN CHIMANBHAI PATEL): (a) No, Sir.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) Yes, Sir.

Power Shortage in Karnataka

883. SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to State:

(a) whether Government are aware of the persisting power shortage in Karnataka due to steep fall in hydel generation;

(b) whether Government are also aware that power shortage is forcing the industrialists to consider relocating the industries outside the State and also adversely affecting the prospects of new investments;

(c) the steps taken to estabilise the generation capacity of Raichur Thermal Power Station which has been facing frequent shut downs due to inadequate linkage with Singareni collieries; and

(d) whether Government would ask the CEA and the Southern Electricity grid to supplement supplies to the State, with an additional 1000 MW during peak load hours?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI URMILA BEN CHIMANBHAI